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DUN'S REVIEW

COMMERCIAL AND BANKING FAILURES FROM OFFICIAL RECORDS
COMMODITY PRICE INDEX ~ BANK CLEARINGS REPORTS

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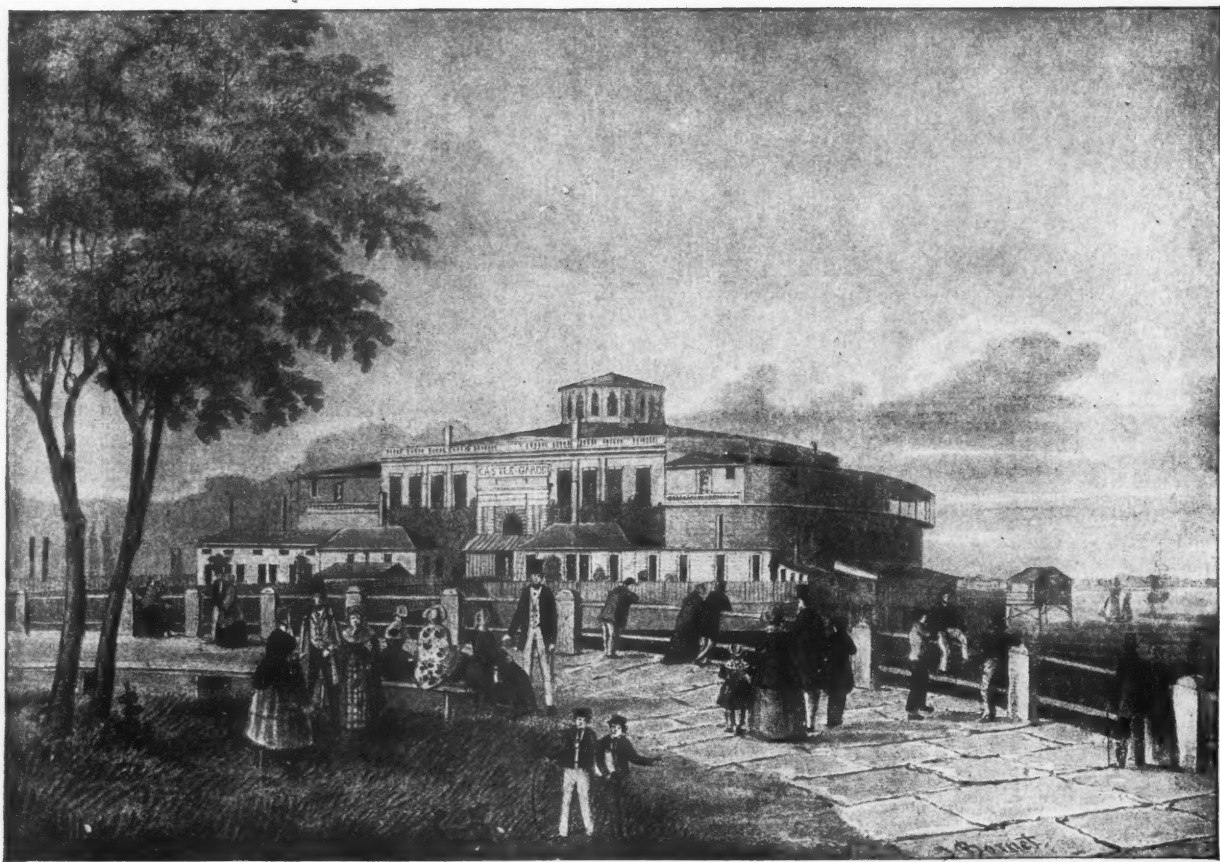
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articles from outstanding
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The oldest and largest Mercantile Agency in the World
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When the Aquarium was Called "Castle Garden"



Built as a Fort during the war of 1812 Castle Garden later became the point of entry into the United States for many thousands of immigrants from all parts of the world.

Through its gates came some of this country's most celebrated captains of industry. Andrew Carnegie the steel magnate, A. T. Stewart the merchant, Jacob H. Schiff the banker and an illustrious list of others passed through this grim old structure to embark upon careers of exceptional achievement.

It is a common fallacy to view the past enviously—to feel that in our father's and grand-

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R. G. DUN & CO.
THE MERCANTILE AGENCY

*The Oldest and Largest Mercantile Agency
in the World*

290 Broadway New York City

ESTABLISHED 1841

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PUBLISHED WEEKLY BY

R. G. DUN & CO., 290 BROADWAY, NEW YORK

The Oldest and Largest Mercantile Agency in the World

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TRADE REVIEW OF THE WEEK

Retail trade for the Christmas holidays wound up with a fair volume. Sales were heavy right up to the close of the shopping period, with last Saturday the biggest day of the month, night operation by many stores helping to swell the total. The broader range of gift lines included electrical home devices, furniture, hosiery and adult games. Electrical household labor-saving devices sold well, but the movement of other electrical supplies was under the seasonal normal.

Sales Volume Fair

Houses specializing in sporting and athletic goods had a fair season, and so did most of the stationers. Industrial buying, however, followed closely the trend of trade conditions, and instances of increased requirements were scattered. Despite extensive advertising and drastic price reductions, sales of radios were off when compared with the volume of a year ago. Calls for last-minute holiday merchandise kept shipping departments quite busy, yet purchases for

January sales brought the chief activity to wholesale markets. After winding up the year with clean stocks, for the most part, dealers in dry goods at

wholesale promise to make purchases in volume, once prices will have become steadier. Current purchases, however, are confined largely to close-out lots of various goods, such as cutting flannels, blankets and bedspreads. Buyers from many pivotal points have placed larger orders than was anticipated.

Spring Buying Gains

Spring buying, as a rule will be late, but some orders for Spring coats and suits have been received. The downward revisions that have been made in

shoes will result in some of the new Spring lines being priced fully 15 per cent below the listings of last Spring. In the electrical supply trade, the outstanding features have been electrical refrigerators and clocks. In most wholesale and jobbing markets, there is less hesitancy when commitments are under consideration, because quotations generally are low.

DUN'S INDUSTRIAL INDICES

Factors Reported Weekly:

Dun Reports	1931	1930	P.C.
Bank Clearings.....	\$5,447,761,000	\$7,377,619,000	-24.8
Commodity Price Advances.....	14	11	....
Commodity Price Declines.....	34	33	....
Insolvencies (number).....	563	456	+23.4

Industrial Activity

†Crude Oil Output (barrels).....	2,430,450	2,202,200	+10.4
Electric Power Output (kwh)....	*1,675,653	*1,748,109	-5.3
Freight Car Loadings.....	613,534	744,443	-17.6

Factors Reported Monthly:

Agriculture

†Cotton Consumption (bales).....	428,870	415,315	+3.3
Cotton Exports (bales).....	1,070,643	907,640	+18.0

Dun Reports

Price Index Number.....	\$140,401	\$163,020	+13.9
Insolvencies (number).....	2,195	2,031	+8.1
Insolvencies (liabilities).....	\$69,659,612	\$55,260,730	+25.8

Foreign Trade

Merchandise Exports.....	193,000,000	288,978,000	-33.2
Merchandise Imports.....	150,000,000	203,595,000	-26.3

Industrial Activity

Pig Iron Output (tons).....	1,103,472	1,867,107	-40.9
Steel Output (tons).....	1,594,684	2,215,220	-27.9
Unfilled Steel Tonnage.....	2,933,981	3,659,636	-19.4
Building Permits.....	\$38,425,341	\$84,304,501	-54.4

†Daily average production. ‡Domestic consumption. * (000) omitted.

THE STORY OF THE DRESS INDUSTRY

The Sales Service Department of the National Credit Office, a part of the R. G. Dun & Co. organization has recently completed a booklet describing the development of the dress industry. The booklet contains many facts of value to the business man who sells the industry as well as to the individual manufacturers. Liberal use is made of tables and charts to illustrate the points which logically demand the greatest emphasis.

The booklet is confined exclusively to dress manufacturers whose primary purchases are silks, woolens, celanese and rayon.

This article is an attempt to bring out, in narrative form, the principal features contained in "Development of the Dress Industry."

During the present century radical changes have taken place in the manufacture and distribution of dresses. Dresses are now turned out in a series of machine operations where once the consumer finished them by hand. Retail stores throughout the country carry stocks of garments in all price ranges although only a generation ago the ready made dress was practically unknown. The highly organized, intensely competitive dress manufacturing industry of today is an important part of the economic structure, a position which it has attained almost entirely in the last two decades. The purpose of this survey is to show how the industry is constituted and to throw light on the underlying factors which account for its principal characteristics.

In mother's earlier days the jobbers of general dry goods constituted the primary market for dress piece goods. These jobbers received their dress materials direct from the mill and distributed them to retailers throughout the country. The retailers, in turn, sold this merchandise to consumers in the form of yard goods.

When mother was a young lady the addition of a new dress to the wardrobe required serious consideration. The transaction could not be undertaken lightly nor casually—it must be thought through from beginning to end. In the first place yard goods must be bought. Considerable shopping was usually necessary to select goods of the proper texture, color and price. Mother had then to inspect many paper patterns before she decided on the one which she intended to use. She would then buy thread of the right strength and shade and after taking home the goods, the pattern and the thread she would be ready to start making the dress. If she had a great deal of time to herself she might finish the dress within a few days. If she had housework or other duties the dress might not be completed for weeks.

There was, of course, the old family dressmaker, an expert seamstress, who often made dresses all her life for a dozen families or so. Even with her skill many long fittings were always necessary. How much time she saved is problematical but it is clear that her own time on a dress had to

be paid for so that the ultimate saving was probably small.

Farsighted merchants saw that this system of distribution was unnecessarily cumbersome. They came to realize that by completing dresses to order they would save the purchaser's time and that if they did this they could probably sell more dress goods. Accordingly, a few large department stores established dress making departments.

The response to the innovation was gratifying to its originators. Business increased rapidly. Eventually the plan was adopted by department stores in all leading cities. Fewer women were now finishing dresses at home but yard goods sales were showing substantial gains.

Dress making establishments were also formed to profit by the trend to custom dresses. Some of these concerns made dresses of all kinds, some sold evening clothes only, others made afternoon gowns while still others handled orders for riding and hunting costumes. The dressmakers generally chose to cater to the fashionable trade and to locate in the smart shopping districts.

The transition from the custom made to the ready made dress was slow at first but it soon proceeded with accelerating momentum. A few dress manufacturers, pioneers in the field, began to produce dresses in standard sizes to sell at popular prices. They made good profits and their success attracted other operators in increasing numbers. Style changes began to occur more rapidly. Successful manufacturers developed an ability to anticipate them and so were able to widen profit margins. Under these influences the dress manufacturing industry developed quickly into its present form.

Recent Growth Rapid

The growth of the dress manufacturing industry during the past six years has been particularly rapid. Both number of concerns and sales volume showed appreciable gains from 1926 to 1931. In 1926 there were 1,585 concerns doing a business of \$511,724,000 annually whereas in 1931 there were 2,080 firms which had sales totalling \$805,183,000. The industry's record year was 1930 when 2,072 con-

cerns sold \$924,469,000 worth of merchandise. The 1931 sales were below those for 1930 by 12.9 per cent.

None of us can glance through the financial pages these days without seeing comparisons made between the volume of business done by various units and industries in the current year and in the past years. We see that the most recent sales figures are generally from 15 to 50 per cent below those of the corresponding period of the preceding year. Another notable feature of recent reports is that business in many cases is being done on a level which is about equivalent to that of 1927, 1926 or even an earlier year. The record of the dress manufacturing industry is in sharp contrast to reports of this kind since the decline from last year was only 12.9 per cent and the volume of business remains well above that which was done in 1928.

Changes Always in Progress

In 1929 24 per cent of the number of dress manufacturing concerns in business discontinued operations. In the following year the total was 24.3 per cent. A number of new dress making ventures are started each year. For 1929 and 1930 the average number of these concerns was about 32.7 per cent of the total number in the industry. In 1930 alone nearly one-third of all dress manufacturing concerns changed the price range of goods which they sold.

These high ratios of change are characteristic of the dress industry. Profits are large and they attract many new operators each year. It is relatively easy to start in the dress manufacturing

business because equipment is comparatively simple and orders can always be sent out to contractors. Many new concerns unfortunately are poorly equipped with cash and experience. These causes account for the high percentage of new organizations and of withdrawals, some of which are voluntary and some otherwise.

The dress industry has definite requirements of location. Manufacturers in certain classes are to be found only on main streets; others locate quite generally on side streets. It is often possible for a buyer to go through an entire building in the garment district and find there only concerns which produce a \$6.75 garment.

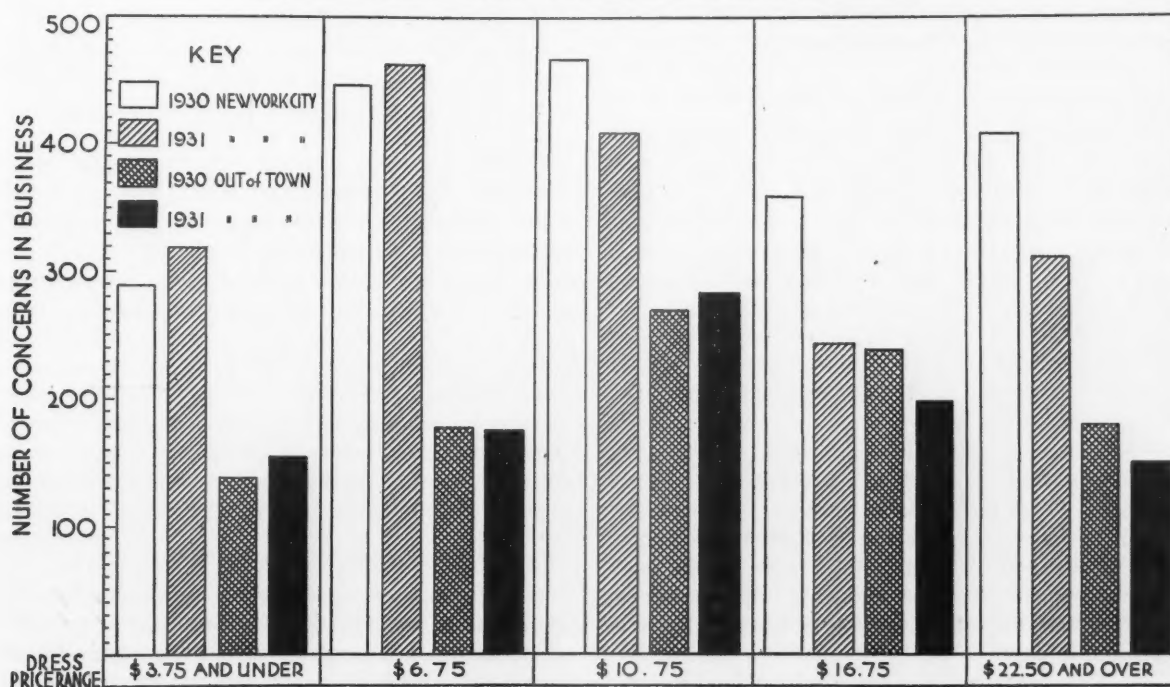
The many changes in price range each year often cause corresponding changes of address although removals can also be due to a desire to reduce overhead or to the necessity to find more commodious quarters to handle increased business.

Large Concerns do Most Business

In 1931 the dress manufacturers with an annual sales volume of over \$1,000,000 accounted for 37.7 per cent of the sales of the industry. Those whose business was between \$500,000 and \$1,000,000 did 24.2 per cent of the total business, while 23.6 per cent was done by those with sales of \$250,000 to \$500,000 and the remaining 13.4 per cent by concerns with a sales volume of less than \$250,000.

The large concerns did more business than any other single classification. There are a few leading dress manufacturers whose annual sales amount to several millions of dollars. It is natural

Chart showing number of concerns in New York City and Out of Town and the price range of the dresses they manufacture—From "Development of the Dress Industry"



December 26, 1931

for the division in which these are included to show a greater sales volume than any other.

If we combine the two middle classes we have a group with sales from \$250,000 to \$1,000,000. Establishments in this category sold 47.8 per cent of the total for the industry. This is because slightly more than 40 per cent of all manufacturers are in this division and this tends to offset the high volume of the largest concern.

Comparison of the sales figures of the industry for 1930 and 1931 show us that the greater decline from last year was shown in the sales of concerns with a business of over \$1,000,000 annually. These organizations sold a dollar volume of goods in 1931 that was 23.2 per cent less than their 1930 business. None of the other groups reported recent sales as much as 8 per cent below those of 1930.

There is an important cause for the discrepancy between the sales shrinkage of the largest and the smaller concerns. Many of the larger units are stock houses. When a design appeals to them they make it up, put it in stock and go out for orders. If the orders do not measure up to the estimates the house is left with a supply of unpopular dresses which must be sold at sacrifice prices to make way for more active lines.

Because of limited capital many of the smaller concerns operate on a principle which causes them to be known as order houses. They will make dresses up in any design that the buyer may specify.

In addition, the smaller concerns have an added advantage in that they usually confine themselves to the cheapest and most active garments. Clearly in a period such as that through which we are now passing the sales of higher priced goods are apt to fall off more sharply than those of medium priced and cheap grades.

Lowest Price Range Most Active

It is a striking fact of the dress industry today that more than 52 per cent of the total annual sales are of garments selling at a wholesale price between \$6.75 and \$10.75. This is an intermediate range in comparison with the cheap dresses which sell for \$3.75 or less and the comparatively expensive styles which wholesale at \$22.50 or over. If the sales of the cheapest dresses be added to those of the medium priced garments the total will be found to be 70 per cent of the aggregate for ready made dresses.

There is obviously a strong demand for dresses selling in the lower price ranges. They are made in all fashionable styles and the materials in them have fair wearing qualities. A woman can buy several of them for the price of one moderately expensive dress and this enables her to attain a fair degree of variety in her wardrobe at reasonable cost.

This feature of the lower priced dress appeals

strongly to business and professional women and to housewives whose earnings and income are not large. In the aggregate there are many millions of women in this category and because of this they constitute an extremely desirable market.

Since the dollar sales figures of low priced dresses greatly exceed those of the more expensive grades it is apparent that there are a great many more of the cheaper garments sold each year. There are in fact, so many of the low priced units sold that it is altogether probable that manufacturers of dresses which sell for a wholesale price of \$10.75 and under consume more than 90 per cent of the total yardage cut.

This estimate enables us to visualize the breadth of the market for fabrics which exists among manufacturers of low priced dresses. If nine-tenths of the yardage is consumed by these operators it behooves the maker of fabrics to bear their requirements clearly in mind when planning his production and sales schedules in order that he may obtain a fair share of the business. Obviously, the fabric manufacturer who concentrates his attention on the groups which buy only 10 per cent of the total yards is unnecessarily limiting his sales possibilities and he must always consider the potential shrinkage of his market through his customers changing price range.

Price Trend Downward

Not only do the sales of low priced dresses make up the bulk of the sales of the industry but sales in this division are increasing whereas sales of the other groups are declining. A comparison between the statistics on manufactured dresses in the years 1930 and 1931 shows a decided decrease both in number of concerns operating and in sales volume in every classification except those handling \$3.75 and those handling the \$6.75 lines. These two groups showed marked gains in number of operators and in dress sales.

These figures tend to support the view that in the industry today there is a clearly defined trend toward the low priced dress. There are good reasons why this should be so. Manufacturers have quite generally effected payroll and rent savings and their fabrics cost far less than they did last year. They are able to offer a garment of higher quality than formerly to sell at the same or lower price. Realizing the strong demand for dresses in the low price range many manufacturers have chosen to concentrate their activities there and competition forces them to turn out the finest possible garment that it is within their power to produce.

Ladies and Misses Dresses Lead

The standard type dresses are in greatest demand. It is natural, then, to find more manufacturers handling these designs than the other. More than 1,600 manufacturers made misses dresses in

1931, slightly fewer than 1,500 produced ladies dresses and less than 1,300 handled street dresses. There were fewer manufacturers turning out other types although there were substantial numbers engaged in the production of such grades as sports, evening, tailored, stouts, juniors and childrens.

The reason for the predominance of activity in standard lines is clear. The average woman's wardrobe contains several sets of ladies and street dresses. Misses dresses are worn by girls the country over. Obviously the bulk of the business lies here. All the other classifications are to some degree specialized and they do not enjoy the same consistent demand as these three staples. It is not uncommon for a woman to own few or no dresses of the non-standard varieties.

Silk the Most Popular Fabric

There are more than 2,000 dress manufacturers using silk. No other fabric was used by as many concerns. Next to silk woolens and velvets were most popular with nearly 700 concerns using the former and almost 600 employing the latter. No other material was used by as many as 400 concerns—striking evidence of the popularity of the three principal fabrics and also of the strong demand for silk dresses.

Women in all periods of history and in all climates have been fond of silk garments ever since the material first became available to them. There is a softness and yet a tone to the fabric that sets it apart from all others. It is not surprising, then to find that with the advent of new low prices many more women are buying silk dresses than ever before and that the great majority of the manufacturers are using it. Velvets and woolens are also comfortable, durable and dressy, qualities which account for their popularity.

Corporations Predominate

An examination into the forms of organization under which the dress manufacturers do business reveals that corporations are greatly in the majority. Of the 2,080 concerns in business, 1,240 or 59.5 per cent are corporations, 438, or 21.1 per cent are partnerships and 402, or 19.4 per cent are individuals.

The predominance of corporations is explainable on the ground of style and of the limited liability which this form of organization provides. With the broadening of knowledge of business methods all lines have seen larger increases in the number of corporations and this form has generally been accepted as a standard. It may also be considered that the industry is a hazardous one and its demands for success are exacting. The chances of failure are great. An individual or partner must stand the full loss in case of insolvency whereas it is the assets of the corporation which bear the brunt.

Long Established Concerns Few

An interesting sidelight on the present structure of the dress manufacturing industry is contained in the fact that 78.2 per cent of the concerns, which do 68.7 per cent of the business, have been in business for 8 years or less. A relatively small number of the establishments have been in business for over 8 years and their sales are less than half those of the newer concerns.

These facts are illustrative of the rapid changes and high hazard which are characteristic of the industry and which tend to keep operating conditions unsettled. Many new concerns continue in business only a short time before a change is made in the organization and a new company is formed. Withdrawals, voluntary and enforced, occur in large numbers each year. Style and price changes are frequent and they demand prompt action from manufacturers. Under these conditions it is often a real problem for a concern to remain in business for 8 years.

New York is Leading Dress Center

The volume of business transacted by dress manufacturers in New York City greatly exceeds that done in any other city in the country. More than two-thirds of the number of concerns are located in New York and they do three-quarters of the business of the industry. No other single city has as much as 2 per cent of the number of concerns or does as much as 6 per cent of the total business. New York is, in this way, definitely established as the leading dress center.

There are a number of good reasons for the selection of New York as the dress center. The city not only has a large shopping population of its own but, being the largest and wealthiest city in the country it is nationally recognized as a style center and so attracts buyers from all parts of the nation. Transportation and financing facilities in New York are the best and good equipment, advantageous locations and skilled workers may be obtained promptly and reasonably.

Low Price Range Has Fewest Failures

In 1931 there were failures among manufacturers of \$3.75 dresses to the number of 186, or 8.9 per cent of the entire number. The percentage of failures to the total number in the lines was successively higher for each higher price range with the greatest percentage, 14.8 per cent, being reported for manufacturers of the most expensive garments, those selling for \$22.50 and over.

We already know that the lowest price ranges represent the most active divisions of the industry and that the higher priced garments are more sluggish. The greater demand for the cheaper goods is a favorable influence for the manufacturers in that

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STEADY CONTRACTION IN YEAR'S BUILDING OPERATIONS

Total Contracts for 1931 Show Decline of 30 Per Cent from the 1930
Record—Slight Reduction in Building Costs

While considerable unevenness has marked the activity in the building industry this year, the few instances of gains have been more than counterbalanced by heavy losses in other districts. As a result, total volume of work reveals a minimum decline of 30 per cent from the record of 1930.

Some Districts Report Gains

The heaviest recession has been noted in the construction of large commercial and industrial structures, as the building of one and two-family houses has been relatively better than other classes of work in many parts of the country. At St. Louis, building permits issued for the eleven months of 1931 showed a gain of 8.3 per cent, when compared with the total for the same months of 1930. In Florida, building took a decided leap forward in November, running more than \$2,000,000 ahead of the volume in November, last year. At Indianapolis, the value of permits from January 1 to December 1 showed a gain of approximately 14 per cent over the volume for the comparative period of 1930.

There also was a good gain recorded at Syracuse, and there was an increase of nearly \$2,000,000 in the value of building work carried on this year in the Twin Cities. In the latter section, however, the gain was attributable largely to Federal and commercial building. At Richmond, residential building is fully on a par with that of last year, but other types of work showed a decrease. At New Haven, more than \$1,000,000 is being spent monthly for labor and materials by Yale University, and this outlay is expected to continue for many months.

Demand for Loans Light

Offers of funds for building have been ample, but the general recession of activity has resulted in a decrease in the demand. Rates of interest remain about the same as they were at the first of the year, but there has been an inclination to be stricter in appraisements. Public construction also has suffered, due largely to the general lack of funds and the difficulties in meeting current expenditures and liabilities, as well as for the cutting down of taxes wherever possible.

Lack of financing continues to be a handicap to residential building, as there is little second-mortgage money available, and building and loan associations report that 90 per cent of their applicants have insufficient capital to make their equities large enough to deserve consideration. Insurance companies continue to accept a conservative amount of desirable loans on low valuations.

All loans for building purposes are being scrutinized carefully and, in most instances, are restricted to 50 per cent and occasionally 60 per cent of the actual value of the project under consideration. While savings banks continue to report deposits heavy, depositors, in many cases, are not disposed to build or buy homes while there is a possibility of further declines in property values.

Building Costs Slightly Lower

The trend in prices of building materials is downward, although now fairly steady, with minimum inventories carried by dealers. Hardware prices are off, to some extent, but not so much as items controlled by a wider range of producers. Cement, lumber, brick and such items have declined steadily in price, though not much recently, because distributors have not seen any wisdom in trying to press offerings.

While prices have reached a lower level during the current year, they are believed to be stabilized at the present low level. The cost of building now is about 15 per cent less than it was last year at this time. This is due chiefly to the lower costs of materials. Approximately 58 per cent of construction cost is incurred by labor, and about 42 per cent by material. While there has been no published scale reduction in the wages of skilled workmen, labor charges have been reduced, either through direct cutting of the scale or indirectly. There is an abundance of both skilled and common labor.

The supply of practically all materials on hand is far beyond immediate requirements, and naturally the production has been cut to a minimum. No marked improvement in output can be expected until the surplus stocks will have been reduced.

Outlook for 1932 Encouraging

The real estate market continues rather inactive, and there now is considerable vacant property, due largely to many families consolidating their living quarters. However, very few new homes were erected during the past year, and some authorities are of the opinion that an actual shortage of dwellings will occur when conditions again will have become normal. Values of business property also have shrunk, and conservative builders are disinclined to embark in new operations until property values will have become more stabilized.

The immediate outlook is for an unchanged condition during the next few months, with an improvement anticipated toward Spring. Many large projects, which have been held in abeyance for more

than two years, are expected to get under way at that time.

Construction Heavier in South

Building in Florida in November took a decided leap forward, and the State, as a whole, increased its permits in that period more than \$2,000,000, as compared with those of November of last year. The principal cities all showed increases in value of permits issued. The greatest increase was shown in Miami, where the figures jumped from \$127,461 in November, 1930, to \$2,549,436 this year.

While the permits for the construction of Federal projects in that city accounted for a large part of the increase, there was private building which also aided in the upward trend.

Jacksonville had in November, 1930, 245 permits issued, totalling \$85,055, while for the same period this year there were 264 permits, totalling \$111,110. These permits were mostly for residences and repairs and additions. Tampa permits for the month amounted to \$44,029, as compared with \$34,263, last year. Based on returns made to the State trade body, building permits amounted to \$3,115,802, as compared with \$955,212 in November, 1930.

Building loans are not readily obtainable, except in restricted areas; interest rates are from 6 to 8 per cent. There is very little demand in the building material and lumber line, and prices are unusually low.

Gain in St. Louis District

Building permits issued in St. Louis for the eleven months of 1931 amounted to \$16,332,674. This compares with \$15,074,399 for the same period of 1930, an increase of 8.35 per cent, with the average for the corresponding months of the preceding five-year period of \$31,722,632, a decrease of 48.51 per cent. The increase is accounted for by a spurt early in the year, when several major projects were

launched; since April, it has not held its own with the record of last year.

Residential building of one and two-family houses has been relatively better than other classes of construction. Material prices are lower than they have been for years, and union labor wage scales are being maintained pretty well.

Outlook Improves at Baltimore

The local building situation is believed to parallel closely that which exists in most sections of the country, and the industry is not yet in a particularly satisfactory condition.

With a total of \$1,772,040 last month, Baltimore ranked third in a list of 25 cities reporting the largest volume of permits for that month, being surpassed only by New York City and Los Angeles. Baltimore's total for November, 1930, was \$1,946,160, and for the same month of 1929 was \$2,232,800.

These figures indicate a consistent contraction but it is believed that the recession is now past history. The figures for October, 1931, were \$1,599,240, and the month of April, with permits totalling \$5,869,440, marked the highest valuation for any month this year.

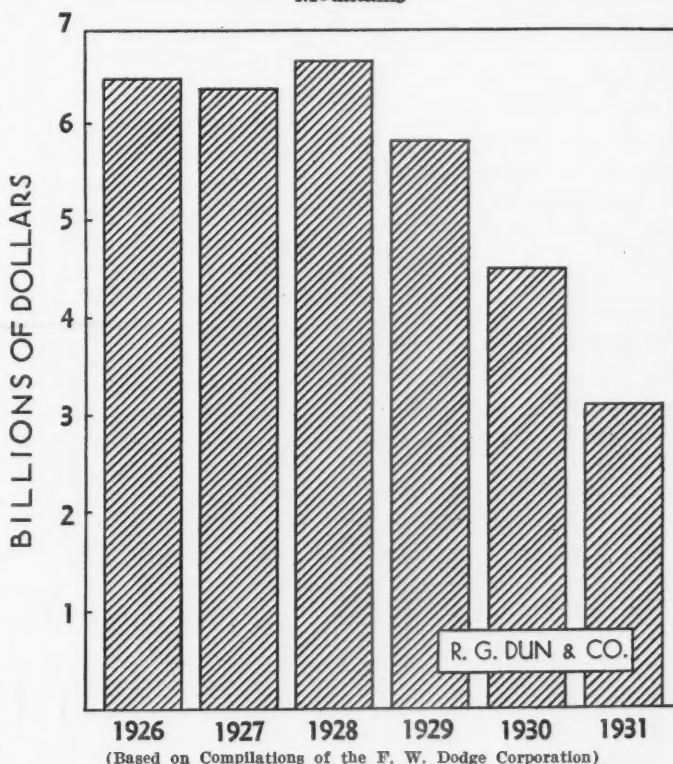
For the eleven-month period ended November 30, the total valuation of permits was \$28,769,520, contrasted with \$30,786,712 for the like period of 1930, a decline of only \$2,017,192. The total for 1930 was \$32,628,952, which figures this year's aggregate is unlikely to reach. The real estate market here continues rather inactive, and there is much idle improved property, both residential and business.

Permits Increase at Indianapolis

The building permits in Indianapolis for the period from January 1, 1931, to December 1, 1931, totalled \$8,860,814, against \$7,777,600 for the same period of 1930, and \$14,853,707 for the same period

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Value of Building Contracts for 37 States East of the Rocky Mountains



Volume of new construction work during 1931, based on preliminary figures, will run about 30 per cent under the record for 1930, despite isolated instances of gains. Residential building has been relatively better than other classes of work.

BUSINESS CONDITIONS OF THE WEEK—REPORTED BY

BOSTON There was a big increase in the number of articles purchased at retail during the week, but the lower price basis and the tendency to shift to cheaper articles has left the volume of Christmas sales, as a whole, lower than it was last year.

Although seasonal quietness prevails in the textile trade, and mills are taking little raw wool, stocks are held firmly at current prices. The outlook for cotton goods has improved slightly, with the firming of raw cotton, but the New England mills are not disposed to make purchases at the present level of prices. Shoe manufacturers are operating in moderate volume, but even at the current low prices of leather they are not inclined to add to their stocks.

BUFFALO In local retail stores, general retrenchment and lowered prices appear to be the rule. City trade is holding up well, but there is a noticeable falling off in the usual business from the western New York district, which ordinarily gravitates to this city.

Many manufacturers in this territory are confronted with a surplus of plant capacity, and some of these now are arranging to take on additional new lines for production beginning in January. New building construction in this territory shows an encouraging improvement.

CHICAGO Wholesale merchandising houses reported a brisk volume of last minute re-orders for inexpensive holiday goods, and it was apparent that the Midwestern retailers, as a whole, had underestimated both the volume and character of their holiday trade. Crowds in the retail stores on State Street and in the neighborhood shopping centers continued large, and one leading department store reported that the toy trade held up well.

The number of items sold was reported up to the total of last year, but the value in dollars was somewhat lower.

CINCINNATI With inventory period at hand, and existing hesitancy in other respects, the trade situation still presents many elements of uncertainty, but the outlook is not without encouraging features and, in many directions, there is reassurance that points to a definite improvement after the turn of the year. Low inventory and more stabilized commodity quotations undoubtedly will influence buyers now coming into the market for future requirements.

In retail trade, holiday buying among leading stores was gratifying from a standpoint of unit sales which, in some instances, exceeded the number handled last year, but the demand being for cheaper merchandise, with reduced prices, restricted the volume in dollars.

CLEVELAND Retail trade for the Christmas holidays wound up with a fair volume. The percentage of increase was quite marked, as compared with that of the previous month. Compared with that of last year, it was from 10 to 25 per cent less in such lines as wearing apparel, furniture, jewelry and holiday novelties. Department stores averaged about 12 per cent reduction in business, and the drug and grocery chain stores suffered a decline of from 5 to 8 per cent.

Manufacturing conditions in general continue at about the same range as during the past two or three weeks. Wholesalers, as a rule, report only a nominal number of re-orders during the holiday season, and business in this line now is quiet.

DENVER Retail trade, which was about 25 per cent off during the first eleven months of the year, improved considerably during the early part of December. Although Christmas shoppers bought conservatively, the total volume of sales made a fair showing, many of the larger stores keeping open in the evenings to accommodate buyers.

Bank clearings in this district show a decrease of about 20 per cent and postal receipts a decline of 9 per cent. The number of building permits has declined 15 per cent, while the value of permits is about 10 per cent under last year's total for the same period. Although the majority of merchants look toward the future with more cheerfulness than was apparent a few months ago, they anticipate no immediate betterment in the general situation.

LOS ANGELES With continued seasonal weather, holiday trade has shown the largest volume of the year; the bulk of the sales is made up of the cheaper grades of merchandise. Colder weather has stimulated the sale of Winter merchandise, the local manufacturers report substantial orders for Spring lines. Manufacturers of furniture report a substantial volume of orders for immediate delivery.

Motion picture studios are completing schedules for 1932, and most studios are busy at the present time. Many major productions are scheduled for the coming year.

MEMPHIS Except for the stimulus of holiday buying, which has been up to reasonable expectations, there has been little change in business activity. Demand has been chiefly for articles of utility value and moderately priced, as the public's buying power continues restricted.

Unfavorable weather has made further picking of cotton out of the question for the time and also has damaged the grade of that left in the fields. This has lessened the volume of holiday spending money.

DISTRICT OFFICES OF R. G. DUN & CO.

NEW ORLEANS Retail trade, which has been suffering from unseasonable weather conditions has been stimulated somewhat during the past week by colder weather, and indications are that the holiday buying season will end with volume making a good showing.

The rice market has been only moderately active, and demand for sugar continues light; quotations, however, are holding firm. The cotton market has been quiet, with quotations showing only moderate fluctuations.

NEWARK Local department and retail stores report increased activity during the week. Volume, as to units, compares favorably with that of last year, but dollar volume, accounted for by lower prices generally, is below that of last year and that of the year before. Wearing apparel, including clothing and shoes, is seasonably active. Piece goods and notions also are selling well. Toys, stationery and kindred lines are in good demand. Some improvement is noted in the demand for radio sets and parts.

Beyond a seasonal improvement with manufacturers of jewelry, that line is quiet. Manufacturers in other lines note little or no change, and for the most part are marking time. Manufacturers of advertising novelties and metal specialties are fairly busy.

OMAHA Retail business improved this month, as a result of holiday buying, but sales were in smaller units, and dollar volume probably is 20 per cent less than that of a year ago. Continued warm weather for this period of the year has had its effect on sales of heavy Winter merchandise, and this class of business has been unsatisfactory.

Livestock receipts in November in the local market showed a gain of 46 per cent, compared with those for the same month a year ago. Sales in the country districts have been retarded somewhat because of the low prices for hogs and the large holdings of grain.

PHILADELPHIA As a whole, volume of Christmas sales in this district did not reach the expected figure, although the results of the last-minute buying will not be known until early next week. As compared with the totals of last year, gains were made in some of the textile divisions, electrical goods departments and in novelties. Demand for expensive lines was light all through the shopping season.

Sales of draperies have been of fair proportions during the last few weeks, some manufacturers having increased their operating schedules, as they have sufficient orders on hand to keep them running until late in February.

PORTLAND, Ore. The week has been very favorable for shopping. All lines have maintained a steady volume. In some quarters an increase is reported over the total for the corresponding period of 1930. While no striking improvement can be announced in any line, the fact that no serious falling off has been experienced has produced a better feeling.

A recent inspection of lumber yards found stocks low, and wholesalers in the Northwest are reluctant to book orders until after January. Preparations are in progress to meet an improved demand. Prices are holding steady, and buyers continue cautious. With continued favorable weather for the remainder of the year, volume of sales should compare favorably with that of the previous year.

TOLEDO Retail distribution in this district equals the sales total of last year in the number of units, but the dollar volume is less. A further increase in local sales is expected because of a first distribution of small dividends by recently closed banks.

Building permits continue at a low figure, although showing a slight increase over those of a week ago. Machine tool plants are operating at a moderate rate, preparing tools for other manufacturing plants. Employment in a large percentage of local industrial plants remains at practically the same number as during the past two weeks.

TWIN CITIES (Minneapolis-St. Paul) As the holiday buying season approaches its close, it is apparent that somewhere near the usual number of retail purchases have been made. It is equally evident that merchandise purchased has included a much smaller proportion than usual of "luxury" goods and a larger percentage of inexpensive merchandise. The volume of some of the larger department stores has been close to last year's, but profits are expected to prove smaller.

The movement of merchandise by mail and express is said to be much below normal. Except for fill-in orders, the usual pre-inventory stagnation prevails in the jobbing trade—a little more intense than usual. Flour production has fallen below that for this period of 1930.

WICHITA With the holiday season approaching its end, department stores report increased sales and chain stores report an exceptionally good business. Lack of buying is noted in most of the luxury lines, and automobile dealers state that there has been no improvement in the past few months, and do not anticipate any change until early Spring. Wholesale grocers and brokers continue inactive. The unemployment and reduced wages have curtailed business considerably.

WEEKLY QUOTATION RECORD OF

More Stability in Price Trend

Although the leading commodity markets continued to lack uniformity in their disposition to hold recent advances, some items were not wholly indifferent to some encouraging trade develop-

ments. As a result, quotations in Dun's list this week were stabilized for the first time in many months, both advances and declines being exactly of the same number as that set down for the week preceding.

The foodstuffs group made a little better

	Ch'ge	This Week	Last Week	Last Year		Ch'ge	This Week	Last Week	Last Year
FOODSTUFFS									
BEANS: Pea, choice.....100 lbs-10	2.90	3.00	5.50		FAS Plain Red Gum, 4/4".....per M ft.	76.00	76.00	102.00	
Red kidney, choice....." "	3.75	3.75	9.50		FAS Ash 4/4"....." " "	79.00	79.00	90.00	
White kidney, choice....." "	5.00	5.00	8.00		FAS Poplar, 4/4", 7 to 17"....." " "	83.00	83.00	110.00	
COFFEE: No. 7 Rio.....lb	7	7	7		Beech, No. 1 Common, 4/4"....." " "	45.00	45.00	50.00	
" Santos No. 4....." + 1/4	8 1/2	8 1/2	10 1/4		FAS Birch, Red, 4/4"....." " "	85.00	85.00	115.00	
DAIRY:					FAS Cypress, 1"....." " "	82.60	82.60	87.50	
Butter, creamery, extra.....lb + 1/4	31	30 1/2	29 1/2		FAS Chestnut, 4/4"....." " "	70.00	70.00	80.00	
Cheese, N. Y., fancy....." "	16	16	21		No. 1 Com. Mahogany, (African), 4/4"....." " "	150.00	150.00	156.50	
Eggs, nearby, fancy.....doz + 1/2	38 1/2	38	38 1/2		FAS H. Maple, 4/4"....." " "	70.00	70.00	85.00	
Fresh, gathered, extra firsts....." + 1	31	30	30		Canada Spruce, 2x4"....." " "	26.50	26.50	34.00	
DRIED FRUITS:					N. C. Pine, 4/4", Edge Under 12" No. 2 and Better....." " "	41.00	41.00	46.50	
Apples, evaporated, fancy.....lb	10 1/2	10 1/2	12		Yellow Pine, 3x12"....." " "	55.00	55.00	62.00	
Apricots, choice....." "	9 1/4	9 1/4	12		FAS Basswood, 4/4"....." " "	66.50	66.50	79.00	
Citron, imported....." "	18	18	21		Douglas Fir, Water Ship, c. i. f., N. Y., 2x4", 18 feet....." " "	22.25	22.25	26.00	
Currents, cleaned, 50-lb. box....." "	11 1/4	11 1/4	11 1/4		Cal. Redwood, 4/4", Clear....." " "	66.00	66.00	75.00	
Lemon Peel, Imported....." "	17	17	16 1/2		North Carolina Pine Roofers, 18/16x6"....." " "	23.00	23.00	27.50	
Orange Peel, Imported....." "	17 1/2	17 1/2	17		NAVAL STORES: Pitch.....bbl	5.00	5.00	7.00	
Peaches, Cal. standard....." "	7 1/2	7 1/2	7 1/2		Rosin "B"....." -10	3.55	3.55	5.00	
Prunes, Cal. 40-50, 25-lb. box....." "	5 1/2	5 1/2	7 1/2		Tar, kiln burned....." "	10.00	10.00	13.00	
FLOUR: Spring Pat.....196 lbs-5	4.30	4.35	4.40		Turpentine, carlots.....gal - 1/2	38 1/2	39	41 1/4	
Winter, Soft Straights....." "	3.30	3.30	4.00		PAINTS: Litharge, com'l Am. lb	13 1/2	13 1/2	7 1/2	
Fancy Minn. Family....." "	5.65	5.65	6.30		Red Lead, dry....." 100	13 1/2	13 1/2	8 1/2	
GRAIN: Wheat, No. 2 R.....bu -4	72 1/4	76 1/4	1.01 1/2		White Lead in Paste.....lb	13 1/2	13 1/2	13 1/2	
Corn, No. 2 yellow....." - 1 1/4	53 1/2	54 1/2	83 1/2		" " dry....." "	13 1/2	13 1/2	7 1/2	
Oats, No. 3 white....." -1	35 1/2	36 1/2	41		Zinc, American....." "	6 1/2	6 1/2	6 1/2	
Rye, No. 2, F.O.B....." -3 1/2	56 1/2	60	44 1/2		" F. P. R. S....." "	9 1/2	9 1/2	9 1/2	
Barley, malting....." + 1/2	61	60 1/2	57 1/2		ADVANCES 0; DECLINES 2.				
Hay, No. 1.....100 lbs	95	95	1.40						
HOPS: Pacific, Pr. '30.....lb	18	18	17						
MOLASSES AND SYRUP:									
Blackstrap-bbls.....gal	9 1/2	9 1/2	12						
Extra Fancy....." "	54	54	54						
PEAS: Yellow split, dom. 100 lbs-25	5.00	5.25	4.50						
PROVISIONS, Chicago:									
Beef Steers, best fat.....100 lbs	12.25	12.25	14.50						
Hogs, 220-250 lb. wts....." +15	4.30	4.15	7.75						
Lard, N. Y., Mid. W....." -25	5.80	6.05	10.10						
Fork, mess.....bbl -50	17.75	18.25	30.50						
Lamb, best fat natives, 100 lbs	5.75	5.75	8.00						
Sheep, fat ewes....." "	2.50	2.50	3.00						
Short ribs, sides 1'se....." -50	6.00	6.50	11.50						
Bacon, N. Y., 140 down.....lb - 1/4	7	7 1/2	14						
Hams, N. Y., 18-20 lb....." "	10 1/2	10 1/2	16 1/4						
Tallow, N. Y., sp. loose....." "	3 1/2	3 1/2	4 1/4						
RICE, Dom. Long grain, Fancy, lb	5 1/4	5 1/4	5 1/4						
Blue Rose, choice....." "	3 1/2	3 1/2	4 1/2						
Foreign, Japan, fancy....." "	3 1/2	3 1/2	3 1/2						
SPICES: Mace, Banda No. 1.....lb	39	39	58						
Cloves, Zanzibar....." - 1/4	14	14 1/2	30 1/2						
Nutmegs, 105s-110s....." "	13	13	17						
Ginger, Cochín....." "	7 1/2	7 1/2	12						
Pepper, Lampong, black....." "	10 1/2	10 1/2	13 1/2						
" Singapore, white....." "	14	14	22						
" Mombasa, red....." "	17	17	17 1/2						
SUGAR: Cent. 96.....100 lbs-3	3.09	3.12	3.22						
Fine gran., in bbls....." "	4.20	4.20	4.55						
TEA: Formosa, standard.....lb	11	11	14						
Fine....." "	21	21	22						
Japan, basket fired....." "	12	12	15						
Congou, standard....." "	10	10	12						
VEGETABLES: Cabbage (nearby) bskt.	60	60	1.50						
Onions (Jersey), Yel.....bskt +15	1.90	1.75	1.10						
Potatoes, L. I.....180-lb. sack	2.00	2.00	3.50						
Turnips, Can., Rutabaga.....bag	55	55	1.25						
ADVANCES 7; DECLINES 13.									
BUILDING MATERIALS									
Brick, N. Y., delivered.....1000	10.50	10.50	15.00		BURLAP, 10 1/2-oz. 40-in.....yd - 1/2	4 1/2	4 1/2	5 1/4	
Portland Cement, N. Y., Trk. loads, delivered.....bbl	1.66	1.66	2.60		8-oz. 40-in....." - 1/2	3 1/2	3 1/2	4	
Chicago, carloads....." "	1.85	1.85	1.95		COTTON GOODS:				
Philadelphia, carloads....." "	2.35	2.35	2.50		Brown sheetings, stand.....yd	5 1/2	5 1/2	9	
Lath, Eastern spruce.....100	4.00	4.00	3.75		Wide sheetings, 10-4....." "	42	42	50	
Lime, hyd., masons, N. Y.....ton	13.00	13.00	14.00		Bleached sheetings, stand....." "	13	13	14	
Shingles, Cyp., Fr. No. 1.....1000	8.25	8.25	13.00		Medium....." "	9	9	9 1/2	
Red Cedar, Clear, rail....." "	2.55	2.55	3.66		Brown sheetings, 4 yd....." "	4 1/2	4 1/2	7 1/2	
					Standard print....." "	6 1/2	6 1/2	7 1/2	
					Brown drills, standard....." "	6	6	9 1/4	
					Staple ginghams....." "	7 1/2	7 1/2	8	
					Print cloths, 38 1/2-in. 64x60....." "	3 1/2	3 1/2	5 1/2	
					Hose, belting, duck....." "	19	19	25	
					HEMP: Midway, Fair Current.....lb	4 1/2	4 1/2	5	
					JUTE: first marks....." "	3 1/2	3 1/2	3 1/2	
					RAYON:				
					Den. Fil.				
					a 150 22-32....." "	75	75	95	
					b 150 40....." "	1.00	1.00	1.60	
					a Viscose Process. b Cellulose Acetate.				
					SILK: Italian Ex. Clas. (Yel.) lb.-5	2.30	2.35	2.75	
					Japan, Extra Crack....." -11	2.12	2.23	2.60	
					WOOL, Boston:				
					Average, 25 quot.....lb-.04	36.78	36.82	46.00	
					Ohio & Pa. Fleeces....." "				
					Delaine Unwashed....." "	23 1/2	23 1/2	29	
					Half-Blood Combing....." "	23	23	29	
					Half-Blood Clothing....." "	20	20	26	
					Common and Braid....." "	16	16	24	

WHOLESALE COMMODITY PRICES

showing than it did in the previous exhibit, the declines for the current week totalling but 13, against 15 for the week preceding; advances again stood at 7. Dairy products and some of the provisions were the chief contributors to stability in this group, as grains sagged somewhat from last week's level.

By far the most important revision in the metal group in many weeks was the advance recorded for copper. The gain reflected the more cheerful sentiment in the copper industry as the result of the consummation of plans to curtail production approximately 25 per cent.

	Ch'ge	This Week	Last Week	Last Year		Ch'ge	This Week	Last Week	Last Year
Mich., and N. Y. Fleeces:					Soda ash, 58% light.....100 lbs	1.05	1.05	90	
Delaine Unwashed.....lb	21	21	26		Soda benzoate.....lb	40	40	40	
Half-Blood Combing....."	22	22	27		ADVANCES 2; DECLINES 3.				
Half-Blood Clothing....."	19	19	25		METALS				
Wis., Mo., and N. E.:					Pig Iron: No. 2X, Ph.....ton	15.51	15.51	17.76	
Half-Blood....."	20	20	24		No. 2 valley furnace....."	15.50	15.50	17.00	
Quarter-Blood....."	19	20	25		Bessemer, Pittsburgh....."	17.76	17.76	19.26	
Southern Fleeces:					No. 2 South Cincinnati....."	14.69	14.69	14.19	
Ordinary Mediums....."	19	19	24		Billets, reolling, Pittsburgh..	29.00	29.00	30.00	
Ky., W. Va., etc.; Three-eighths					Forging, Pittsburgh....."	35.00	35.00	36.00	
Blood Unwashed....."	25	25	30		Wire rods, Pittsburgh....."	35.00	35.00	35.00	
Quarter-Blood Combing....."	22	22	30		O-h rails, by, at mill....."	43.00	43.00	43.00	
Texas, Scoured Basis:					Iron bars, Chicago.....100 lbs	1.60	1.60	1.70	
Fine, 12 months....."	55	55	67		Steel bars, Pittsburgh....."	1.60	1.60	1.60	
Fine, 8 months....."	47	47	63		Tank plates, Pittsburgh....."	1.55	1.55	1.60	
California, Scoured Basis:					Shapes, Pittsburgh....."	1.60	1.60	1.60	
Northern....."	46	46	60		Sheets, black No. 24, Pitts-				
Southern....."	45	45	58		burgh....."	2.40	2.40	2.35	
Oregon, Scoured Basis:					Wire Nails, Pittsburgh....."	1.90	1.90	1.90	
Fine & F. M. Staple....."	54	54	70		Barb Wire, galvanized, "				
Valley No. 1....."	48	48	62		Pittsburgh....."	2.55	2.55	2.55	
Territory, Scoured Basis:					Galv. Sheets No. 24, Pitts-				
Fine Staple Choice....."	57	57	70		burgh....."	2.90	2.90	2.90	
Half-Blood Combing....."	52	52	64		Coke, Connellsville, oven.....ton	2.40	2.40	2.50	
Fine Clothing....."	45	45	60		Furnace, prompt ship....."	3.50	3.50	3.50	
Pulled: Delaine....."	63	63	77		Foundry, prompt ship....."	22 3/4	22 3/4	22 3/4	
Fine Combing....."	58	58	60		Aluminum, pig (ton lots).....lb	6 1/4	6 1/4	7 1/4	
Coarse Combing....."	40	40	47		Antimony, ordinary....."	7 1/4	7 1/4	10 1/4	
California AA....."	60	60	73		Copper, Electrolytic....."	3 1/4	3 1/4	4 1/4	
WOOLEN GOODS:					Zinc, N. Y....."	3 3/4	3 3/4	5 1/4	
Standard chevlot, 14-oz.....yd	1.70 1/2	1.70 1/2	1.46		Lead, N. Y....."	21 1/2	21 1/2	26 1/4	
Serge, 11-oz....."	1.35	1.35	1.50		Tin, N. Y....."	4.75	4.75	5.00	
Serge, 16-oz....."	2.00	2.00	2.31		ADVANCES 2; DECLINES 0.				
Fancy cassimere, 13-oz....."	1.57	1.57	2.00		MISCELLANEOUS				
36-in. all-worsted serge....."	45	45	50		COAL: f.o.b. Mines.....ton				
36-in. all-worsted Pan....."	45	45	50		Bituminous:				
Broadcloth, 54-in....."	2.50	2.50	3.50		Navy Standard....."	2.15	2.15	2.10	
ADVANCES 0; DECLINES 5.					High Volatile, Steam....."	1.25	1.25	1.25	
DRUGS AND CHEMICALS					Anthracite, Company:				
Acetanilid, U.S.P., bbls.....lb	36	36	36		Stove....."	8.00	8.00	8.00	
Acid, Acetic, 28 deg.....100 lbs	2.60	2.60	2.60		Egg....."	7.75	7.75	7.75	
Carbolic, cans....."	17	17	17		Nut....."	7.75	7.75	7.75	
Citric, domestic.....lb	37 1/2	37 1/2	40 1/2		Pea....."	5.75	5.75	5.00	
Muriatic, 18'.....100 lbs	1.00	1.00	1.00		DYESTUFFS—Bi-chromate				
Nitric, 52'....."	6.50	6.50	6.50		Potash, am.....lb + 2 1/4	8	5 1/4	9	
Oxalic, spot.....lb	10 1/4	10 1/4	11 1/4		Cochineal, silver....."	46	46	52	
Sulphuric, 60'.....100 lbs	55	55	55		Cutch, Rangoon....."	9 1/4	9 1/4	10	
Tartaric crystals.....lb	27 1/2	27 1/2	31		Gambier, Plantation....."	8 1/2	8 1/2	7 1/4	
Fluor Spar, acid, 98%.....ton	38.50	38.50	38.50		Indigo, Madras....."	1.25	1.25	1.25	
Alcohol, 100 proof U.S.P.....gal	2.37	2.37	2.55 1/2		Prussiate potash, yellow....."	18 1/2	18 1/2	18 1/2	
" wood 95%....."	44	44	44		FERTILIZERS:				
" denatured, form 5....." + 0%	31 1/2	22	39		Bones, ground steamed, 1 1/4,				
Alum, lump.....lb	2.25	2.25	3.50		am., 60% bone phosphate,				
Ammonia, anhydrous....."	15 1/2	15 1/2	15		Chicago.....ton	25.00	25.00	28.50	
Arsenic, white....."	4	4	4		Muriate potash, 80%....."	37.15	37.15	37.15	
Balsam, Copaiba, S. A....."-1	18	19	25		Nitrate soda.....100 lbs	1.77	1.77	2.02	
Flr, Canada.....gal	10.00	10.00	11.00		Sulphate ammonia, do-				
Peru....."-20	95	1.15	1.55		mestic, delivered....."	1.10	1.10	1.87	
Bicarbonate Soda, Am.....100 lbs	2.54	2.54	2.25		Sulphate potash, bs. 90%.....ton	48.25	48.25	48.25	
Bleaching powder, over					OILS:				
34%....."	2.00	2.00	2.00		Cocanut, Spot, N.Y.....lb	3 3/4	3 3/4	5 1/4	
Borax, crystal, in bbl.....lb	2 1/2	2 1/2	2 1/2		China Wood, bbls., spot....."- 1/2	6 1/4	6 1/4	7	
Brimstone, crude domestic.....ton	18.00	18.00	18.00		Cod, Newfoundland.....gal	28	28	54	
Calomel, American.....lb	1.59	1.59	2.05		Corn, crude Mill.....lb + 1/4	3 1/2	3 3/4	7 1/4	
Camphor, slabs....."	53	53	55		Cottonseed, spot....."- 1/4	4	4 1/4	7 1/4	
Castile Soap, white.....case	15.00	15.00	15.00		Lard, Extra, Winter st....."	6 1/4	7 1/4	10 1/4	
Castor Oil No. 1.....lb	10	10	11		Linseed, city raw, carlots....."	9 1/4	9 1/4	13 3/4	
Caustic Soda, 76%.....100 lbs	2.25	2.25	2.30		Neatsfoot, pure....."	47	47	56	
Chlorate potash.....lb	8	8	8		Rosin, first run.....gal	3 1/4	3 1/4	7	
Chloroform, U.S.P....."	25	25	27		Soya-Bean, tank, cars, M. W.....lb	1.58	1.73	1.67 1/2	
Cocaine, Hydrochloride.....oz	8.50	8.50	8.50		Petroleum, Pa., cr., at well, bbl.-15	17	17	17	
Cream Tartar, domestic.....lb	20 1/4	20 1/4	25 1/4		Kerosene, wagon, delivery.....gal	12 3/4	12 3/4	11 3/4	
Epsom Salts.....100 lbs	2.25	2.25	2.25		Gas' auto in gar., st. bbls....."	3	3	3 1/2	
Formaldehyde.....lb	6	6	8 1/4		Wax, ref. 125 m. p.....lb	57.00	57.00	62.00	
Glycerine, C. P. in drums....."	11 1/4	11 1/4	12 1/2		Book, S. & S. C.....lb	5 1/4	5 1/4	5 1/4	
Gum-Arabic, Amber....."	7	7	12		Writing, tub-sized....."	10	10	10	
Benzoin, Sumatra....."	23	23	37		No. 1 Kraft....."	4 1/4	4 1/4	5	
Gamboge, pipe....."	75	75	85		Sulphite, Domestic, bl.....100 lbs-25	2.00	2.25	2.65	
Shellac, D. C....."	38	38	40		Old Paper No. 1 Mix....."-3	15	18	25	
Tragacanth, Aleppo 1st....."-5	1.05	1.10	1.35		PLATINUM.....oz				
Licorice Extract....."	18	18	18		RUBBER: Up-River, fine.....lb	5 1/2	5 1/2	12	
Powdered....."	33	33	33		Plan, 1st Latex, crude....." + 1/4	5 1/4	4 1/4	8 1/4	
Menthol, Japan, cases....."	3.25	3.25	3.85		ADVANCES 3; DECLINES 5.				
Morphine, Sulp., bulk.....oz	7.95	7.95	8.95		TOTAL ADVANCES				
Nitrate Silver, crystals....." + 1/2	24	23 3/4	25 1/2		TOTAL DECLINES				
Nux Vomica, powdered.....lb	7 1/4	7 1/4	8			14	14	11	
Optum, jobbing lots....."	12.00	12.00	12.00			34	34	33	
Quicksilver, 75-lb. flask....."	67.00	67.00	106.00						
Quinine, 100-oz. tins.....oz	40	40	40						
Rochelle Salts.....lb	16 1/2	16 1/2	19						
Sal ammoniac, lump, imp....."	10 1/4	10 1/4	10 1/4						
Sal soda, American.....100 lbs	90	90	90						
Saltpetre, crystals....."	7 1/4	7 1/4	7 1/2						
Sarsaparilla, Honduras.....lb	42	42	42						

NATIONAL MONEY AND CREDIT CONDITIONS

Even Seasonal Requirements Fail to Stimulate Demand for Loans which
Continues Below Normal—Improvement in Retail Collections

MONEY MARKETS

In Eastern Districts

Boston The ratio of the Federal Reserve Bank of Boston decreased during the week from 61.2 to 57.8 per cent. The reserves decreased about \$4,000,000, and the deposits around \$7,000,000. This was more than offset by the increase in the circulation liability of about \$17,000,000. Rates continue nominally unchanged, but the money market is in a much disturbed state on account of the closing of a number of city and out-of-town banks.

Philadelphia Local banks report a slight increase in the demand for funds for the holiday season and year-end settlements. Rates on monetary accommodations, however, remain unchanged, and rule as follows: Call money, 4 per cent; customers' loans, $4\frac{1}{2}$ to 6 per cent; and commercial paper, $3\frac{3}{4}$ to $4\frac{1}{4}$ per cent.

In Western Districts

Chicago There was almost no change in the local money market during the week, as funds continue in ample supply, but demand is below normal for this period of the year. Commercial paper ranges from $3\frac{3}{4}$ to $4\frac{1}{2}$ per cent, and over-the-counter loans from $4\frac{1}{2}$ to $5\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. Brokers' loans on collateral are fairly steady at $4\frac{1}{2}$ per cent, while customers' collateral loans vary from $4\frac{1}{2}$ to $5\frac{1}{2}$ per cent.

Cincinnati Money continues firm locally, with restricted activity prevailing. Commercial loans are confined principally to prime accounts, and loans on call are few. Rates remain firm, averaging $5\frac{1}{2}$ to 6 per cent for industrial transactions and 6 per cent for money on call.

Cleveland The local money market has undergone no important change since last week. The Federal Reserve Bank report indicates that the status quo prevailing during the month of December characterizes the condition of money in general at this time.

COLLECTION CONDITIONS

In Eastern Sections

Boston Almost in all lines collections have become slower during the week.

Pittsburgh Jobbers report a slight improvement in collections, with the average still slow.

Philadelphia There has been no improvement in collections, despite the better trend.

Buffalo Although collections improved during the week, they continue below the seasonal normal.

Newark Good Christmas sales are enabling retailers to meet their bills promptly.

Rochester Some betterment has been noted in retail and installment collections.

In South and Southwest

Baltimore The past week has witnessed no material change in the general collection situation, which continues subnormal for this season of the year.

Atlanta Local collections continue to average not better than slow, as a whole.

New Orleans Large holiday sales have helped retail collections; other lines are slow.

Dallas The collections of wholesale staple accounts continue satisfactory, but retail collections have slowed up a bit of late.

Jacksonville Despite a slight improvement, collections here are generally slow.

Richmond Though the general average is slow, collections are better than they were last week.

In Western Sections

Chicago Collections for the week remain slow and unsatisfactory in wholesale circles, but are fairly normal in the retail trades.

Cleveland Tardiness continues to be experienced in the liquidation of mercantile accounts.

Cincinnati Collections have improved in those quarters benefited by holiday sales.

Kansas City Both wholesalers and retailers report the general collection average as improved.

Detroit Good Christmas sales have made retail collections slightly easier.

Milwaukee Instances of improvement were more numerous in this week's collection reports.

Twin Cities (Minneapolis-St. Paul) Collections in this district average fair to slow.

Toledo Collections are reported as improved over the average at the first of the month.

Wichita There is less slowness in meeting obligations than was reported a month ago.

Omaha The improvement in collections is too slight to raise the average above fair.

Denver Despite the improvement in retail trade, collections in this district continue slow.

San Francisco The collection status in this district continues to average good.

Los Angeles Retail collections are far more satisfactory than they were a week ago.

SECURITY PRICES DRIFT LOWER AFTER SWIFT RALLY

Sharp Improvement of Last Week Again Draws Selling, but Speculative Buying Interest Lags—Bank Clearings Slightly Higher

Approach of the year-end has occasioned in the New York financial markets the rather definite conviction that the worst of the economic depression has now been seen. This conviction amounts almost to certainty in so far as depth is concerned, while an almost equal assurance is felt in regard to the probable duration of the trying period. In the more far-sighted quarters it is pointed out that a downward swing of economic affairs has seldom lasted more than two years and that a measure of distinct improvement is more than likely on any reasonable basis.

There is already a tendency to translate this feeling into action in the stock and bond markets. A buying movement of considerable importance began in equity issues late last week, the two final sessions witnessing the sharpest upswing in quotations seen in many months. Stocks surged forward almost as readily as they dropped in previous dealings and some of the huge declines of this gloomy year were at least in part offset. All groups of issues joined in the movement, as the gain in sentiment was not confined to any one group.

Daily transactions in stocks and bonds on the New York Stock Exchange compare with last year as follows:

Week Ending Dec. 25, 1931	Stocks—Shares		Bonds	
	This Week	Last Year	This Week	Last Year
Friday	3,600,000	2,270,400	\$20,256,000	\$11,539,000
Saturday	1,626,300	1,027,800	8,742,000	5,740,000
Monday	1,900,000	2,104,300	13,523,000	13,020,000
Tuesday	1,400,000	2,543,200	12,176,000	11,574,000
Wednesday	1,500,000	1,582,300	13,890,000	8,871,000
Total	10,026,300	9,528,000	\$68,587,000	\$50,244,000

On a lessened scale this betterment has been continued during the short business week now ending. Although the speculative buying interest lagged at first and was in part offset by profit-taking, purchases on a considerable scale appeared in later dealings and caused some slight further advances. Transactions were on a smaller scale than in the final periods of last week, but they remained substantial.

Copper News Favorable

Developments of the week began to take a constructive turn, and this occasioned more than a little quiet accumulation of shares. Much encouragement in regard to copper stocks was caused by the announcement over the last week-end of an informal agreement among world copper producers to restrict production of this metal to 26½ per cent of capacity. The agreement will remain in effect at least until the end of next year and perhaps longer. Also favorable was the move made by the Atchison for reduction of wages of numerous classes of railroad employees by 15 per cent. This augments the formal efforts of the roads as a whole in their negotiations with the railroad brotherhoods,

and is considered a forerunner of the necessary adjustment in this respect which will lead to a much improved outlook for the carriers.

Railroad Aid Imminent

More than a little importance attaches, likewise, to the prospect of early Congressional action for revival of the reconstruction finance corporation, which is expected to lend much needed aid to the railroads in their financing. The rate pooling plan of the carriers also is expected to be in operation early in the new year and give additional assurance regarding the carriers that need assistance. Although these and other favorable factors were offset somewhat by further tax-selling of stocks, and by the prospect of increased taxes, they sufficed to lighten the atmosphere measurably.

BANK CLEARINGS SLIGHTLY IMPROVED

Bank clearings cover only five business days this week, hence are reduced compared with the preceding week. Relatively, however, they are nearly as large as the heavy total of last week, while the loss compared with a year ago, is smaller than in the first half of December. Total clearings, at all leading cities in the United States amount to \$5,447,761,000 and are 24.8 per cent under those of a year ago. At New York, the amount was \$3,833,836,000, a reduction of 24.7 per cent, while the aggregate for cities outside of New York of \$1,613,925,000 was 25.0 per cent smaller. A number of the Southern centers continue to show less of a decline than in the earlier months of the year. Losses have been quite large in each month during 1931. The decline was especially severe in November, when bank settlements touched the low point for many years.

Bank clearing this week, and average daily bank clearings for the year to date, are printed herewith:

	Five Days Dec. 23, 1931	Five Days Dec. 24, 1930	Per Cent.	Five Days Dec. 26, 1929
Boston	\$260,000,000	\$310,300,000	-16.2	\$391,000,000
Philadelphia	254,000,000	400,000,000	-36.5	540,000,000
Baltimore	67,021,000	83,077,000	-19.3	78,948,000
Pittsburgh	89,259,000	176,680,000	-49.4	151,740,000
Buffalo	25,615,000	34,765,000	-26.3	42,109,000
Chicago	244,906,000	390,653,000	-37.3	539,778,000
Detroit	75,000,000	115,091,000	-35.0	169,829,000
Cleveland	71,000,000	95,158,000	-25.4	118,240,000
Cincinnati	42,443,000	49,553,000	-14.4	67,113,000
St. Louis	62,075,000	96,500,000	-35.7	120,200,000
Kansas City	66,909,000	92,100,000	-27.0	116,800,000
Omaha	25,000,000	32,126,000	-22.2	35,816,000
Minneapolis	47,306,000	57,280,000	-17.2	74,939,000
Richmond	32,000,000	33,564,000	-4.7	42,471,000
Atlanta	31,800,000	38,677,000	-17.8	47,594,000
Louisville	18,000,000	18,911,000	-4.8	29,049,000
New Orleans	30,000,000	35,275,000	-14.9	43,344,000
Dallas	31,000,000	40,580,000	-23.6	55,689,000
San Francisco	95,600,000	130,500,000	-26.8	189,500,000
Portland	20,000,000	26,203,000	-23.7	31,574,000
Seattle	25,000,000	28,906,000	-10.1	35,569,000
Total	\$1,613,925,000	\$2,285,899,000	-25.0	\$2,911,302,000
New York	3,833,836,000	5,092,000,000	-24.7	5,761,000,000
Total All....	\$5,447,761,000	\$7,377,619,000	-24.8	\$8,672,302,000
Average daily:				
December to date	\$1,048,820,000	\$1,505,081,000	-30.8	\$1,908,047,000
November	943,602,000	1,444,730,000	-35.5	2,511,431,000
October	1,160,414,000	1,623,508,000	-29.5	2,780,899,000
Third Quarter	1,144,738,000	1,597,147,000	-23.9	2,165,428,000
Second Quarter	1,433,290,000	1,831,579,000	-21.7	1,972,246,000
First Quarter	1,404,600,000	1,799,904,000	-22.0	2,216,714,000

DULLNESS RULES IN PRIMARY TEXTILE MARKETS

No Disposition to Sacrifice Desirable Merchandise—The Plan to Curtail Production in Cotton Goods Not Yet Complete

The normal year-end quiet is on in primary textile markets and curtailment of mill production is quite general because of the holiday observances. Trade is unusually dull in some channels on account of changing conditions, especially the garment and clothing field. Retail distribution of men's wear and women's wear goods, however, has been greatly stimulated by the large reduction in prices now current. Out of this active retail distribution it is believed that retailers are putting themselves in a stronger position to make purchases for Spring requirements.

Curtailment Plan Incomplete

In their search for distressed merchandise in primary markets, a number of buyers representing syndicates and large institutions have found holders rather firmer than they expected. Desirable merchandise is not being sacrificed in large lots and a number of buyers have stated that they have been forced to buy substandard quality goods for January special sales. Primary merchants contend that consumers have become more critical and that goods bought for price purposes only are not likely to move as well after the turn of the year as they have in some instances in the past few weeks.

A plan of curtailment has been instituted in the cotton goods industry which it is expected will result in reducing the output of print cloths 25 per cent. The silk trade has been held back by the uncertainty of raw silk values abroad, but more interest is being shown in silk merchandise for Spring cutting. Rayon producers are stating now that price changes will not be made in January as production has been pretty closely balanced to the current needs of knitters and weavers.

Staple Goods More Active

Sales of gray goods for printing and converting show a moderate increase, compared with the previous week, with prices remaining substantially unchanged. Surplus stocks of some widths of sheets are reported, while other widths are scarce. Buying has been of a filling-in character, in anticipation of January white goods sales. Colored cottons, such as chambrays, denims, and worksuit materials continue in fair demand and have had a wide distribution, due to the very low prices at which garments have been sold at wholesale and retail.

Some improvement was reported in the sales of small lots of men's wear for quick delivery, and some few duplicates were received on Spring men's wear lines. New openings of worsted dress goods at very low prices have been proving very attractive

to cutters, who are sampling various lines freely.

More interest is developing in silk dress goods materials for the Spring season, but uncertainty prevails in some channels concerning the possible vogue for silk prints in the medium and lower-priced grades. The breaking down of exchange conditions in Japan has left raw silk dealers in a state of uncertainty, and many of them continue to transact business in individual lots from day to day and without open firm quotations.

In the knit goods division competition is still holding prices on full-fashioned goods at unsatisfactory levels. The demand for heavyweight stocks from the West and Northwest has been good and agents have cleaned up any lots available for immediate shipment.

Southern Mill Curtailment Plan

The efforts of buyers of print cloths and convertibles to induce Southern manufacturers to curtail production sharply have been hampered somewhat by the unwillingness of two large mills, that are operating on a day and night basis on contracts that will cover their entire production for the first quarter of the year, to join in the movement at this time. They feel that it will be better for them to complete their contracts and be in a position to join others in curtailment, if it is deemed necessary at the end of March.

The difference in opinion between Southern manufacturers has led buyers to feel that they cannot count upon the full co-operation of the industry on any curtailment plan at this time, but they are convinced that a very large percentage of the industry will follow the suggestions to curtail one week a month, and they hope to find after this week that the co-operation in closing over the Christmas tide holidays will stimulate a very general movement to become effective in January.

This Week's Cotton Prices

The course of prices in the cotton option market at New York and spot prices for each day this week at leading cotton centers are given in the following table:

	Fri. Dec. 18	Sat. Dec. 19	Mon. Dec. 21	Tues. Dec. 22	Wed. Dec. 23	Thurs. Dec. 24
December	6.20	6.24	6.15	6.16	6.17	....
January	6.24	6.26	6.16	6.16	6.15	....
March	6.42	6.42	6.34	6.33	6.30	....
May	6.61	6.60	6.52	6.51	6.47	....
July	6.77	6.79	6.70	6.69	6.65	....

	Thurs. Dec. 17	Fri. Dec. 18	Sat. Dec. 19	Mon. Dec. 21	Tues. Dec. 22	Wed. Dec. 23
New Orleans, cents....	6.04	6.25	6.20	6.14	6.14	....
New York, cents.....	6.20	6.35	6.40	6.30	6.30	....
Savannah, cents.....	5.92	6.09	6.11	6.01	6.02	....
Galveston, cents.....	6.10	6.25	6.25	6.20	6.20	....
Memphis, cents.....	5.50	5.65	5.65	5.60	5.60	....
Norfolk, cents.....	6.13	6.25	6.25	6.19	6.19	....
Augusta, cents.....	5.94	6.06	6.06	6.00	6.00	....
Houston, cents.....	6.00	6.20	6.20	6.10	6.10	....
Little Rock, cents....	5.42	5.60	5.60	5.50	5.50	....
St. Louis, cents.....	5.70	5.70	5.90	5.90	5.80	....
Dallas, cents.....	5.55	5.75	5.75	5.65	5.65	....

TRADING IN HIDES AND LEATHER CONTINUES QUIET

Market Again Fractionally Lower for Hides, and Leathers are Slow of Movement—Reptile Skins Lead Upper Demand

Trading in packer hides, whether on tanners' or packers' terms, has steadily decreased. Sales that are reported out are quickly enumerated. The Indianapolis packer who washes his hides, sold his December production "new" terms, as he did in November, at $7\frac{1}{2}$ c. for native and butt branded steers, 7c. for Colorados; $6\frac{3}{4}$ c. for all-weight native cows and extreme light native steers, and 6c. for branded cows. Slaughter by this packer seems to be decreasing to a material extent and his November kill was estimated at only 1,000 hides. A large Chicago packer sold 1,500 November-December native bulls down to $4\frac{1}{4}$ c. and 200 December branded at $3\frac{3}{4}$ c., registering a decline of $\frac{3}{4}$ c. The hides were sold, "old" terms, but the trade is not regarded as signifying much concerning the disagreement.

Country Hides are Relatively Steady

Country hides have elicited interest and are relatively steady compared with the major markets. Trading, however, has been restricted because holders have seriously resisted the low bids of buyers. Later reports were that buyers advanced their bids some to obtain hides and paid $6\frac{3}{4}$ c. for extremes and $5\frac{3}{4}$ c. for buffs. Formerly most bids were $\frac{1}{4}$ c. less. Now, $5\frac{3}{4}$ c. is reported bid for buffs, with 6c. asked, and that sales were made of extremes at $6\frac{3}{4}$ c.; up to 7c. is talked. Buffs seem the more favored and steadier selection, however, probably because of price difference.

At the River Plate, United States tanners, at gradual declines, absorbed the greater portion of 20,000-odd Argentine frigorifico steers sold, a larger movement than for some time back, but indicating the general weakness prevailing. Latest business was down to $7\frac{3}{8}$ c. to $7\frac{1}{4}$ c. and there were 2,000 Uruguay's sold at $8\frac{1}{8}$ c.

Calfskins are still depressed and sell only when a sufficiently new low basis forces a movement. West, nothing new has developed, but it is assumed prices are nominally weaker than last sales and the fact that the two of the large packers let their November production of kip go at $8\frac{1}{2}$ c. basis for Northern point natives, the first sale of which was noted last week, seems an indication of this. In New York city skins, which are available in a wide spread of weights for calf and kip, some scattered small trading develops for certain substances. The 5 to 7's and 7 to 9's are the neglected weights and nominal. What few 4 to 5-pound calfskins were around were cleaned up at 50c. for collectors' and 55c. for packers. Packers sold 9 to 12's down to \$1.35, which was a former sales rate for collectors and collectors' 12 to 17-pound veal kips went at the same figure.

Sole leather continues to lag in the market the same as upper and other descriptions. Boston reports that in sole leather some lines of offal are in the best request, which is in keeping with general price trends for the cheapest material and the cheapest manufactured product. Light bellies are reported in demand East, sometimes in excess of immediate supply. Up to 15c. has been asked in Boston and it is said occasionally obtained. The bulk of good medium and light bellies sell at 14c. and down, and others at 12c. or lower. As to prices on backs and bend, no definite market exists. Nominally, tannery run union backs are listed at 30c. The question of price, however, is not much of a factor at the moment, as buyers are only disposed to take such quantities as they can use immediately, irrespective of what the price may be. Consequently, there is little inducement for a seller to lower his price. In findings leather, business with some concerns keeps quite good, although there are complaints in other quarters.

Reptile Skins Active

Upper leathers are slow to dull. Boston reports some increase in demand for light shades of kid, and while it cannot be said that there is much volume to this business as yet, nevertheless, there is more of this leather moving than several weeks ago. Some small increase is reported in sales of men's and women's weight calf, but there is no particular volume, the same as for the other lines of upper stock. Side upper has probably sold more regularly and steadily than other upper stock, with the call about equally divided between elk and street-shoe sides. Reptile skins still stand out as an active feature against other varieties of upper stock, but as has been noted, this is chiefly because of the low rates granted by sellers.

Some New Contracts for Shoes

The placing of further orders in shoe manufacturing is limited at this period, but since December 1 more contracts were received than during November, which is a slow month. The volume, however, is not now up to what has ruled during the greater portion of the year, and there was quite a falling off in production in November compared with October. It is hoped that volume will increase after the year's turn. Some New England reports say that chain-store operators are relatively better buyers than other retailers, although the larger chains have steadily urged lower prices. A large New York State manufacturer is said to have had larger sales for the fiscal year ended November 30 than the business for all of last year, which then ended December 31.

FAILURES CONTINUE HIGHER THAN A YEAR AGO

Total for Five Business Days Used in Comparing Figures of Both Years

Insolvencies are again more numerous this week, not in excess of last week but heavier than a year ago. The return, both this week and last year covers only five business days. The records show 563 business defaults this week. This number compares with 667 last week, 575 the preceding week and 457 in the corresponding week of last year. Relatively, the return is quite as heavy this week as it was in the preceding week. There were more defaults in all four geographical divisions this week than a year ago, but the increase was not so large in the East or the South as in the West and the Pacific Coast States.

Of this week's failures in the United States, 379 had liabilities of \$5,000 or more in each instance,

against 421 last week and 296 last year. The increase over that of last year was largely in the East, and for the Pacific Coast States. In the South and the West there was a small increase over last year.

Canadian failures this week, were slightly more numerous than last year. The total was 58 against 74 last week, 61 the preceding week and 53 last year.

SECTION	Five Days Dec. 23, 1931		Week Dec. 10, 1931		Week Dec. 3, 1931		Five Days Dec. 24, 1930	
	Over \$5,000	Total	Over \$5,000	Total	Over \$5,000	Total	Over \$5,000	Total
East	145	183	164	251	137	201	107	164
South	91	136	88	147	101	153	81	123
West	101	165	108	172	90	132	92	131
Pacific	42	79	61	97	45	89	16	39
U. S.	379	563	421	667	382	575	296	457
Canada	37	58	33	74	34	61	33	53

STEEL OUTPUT SAGS WITH APPROACH OF HOLIDAYS

Increased Structural Buying Sustains Production in Several Districts

As the end of the year approaches, consumers are inclined to defer shipping instructions beyond the inventory period and steel-finishing mills are further hampered in arranging satisfactory working schedules. Holiday observance, also, cuts into production and ingot output in the Pittsburgh district shows a recession on the average to about 25 per cent. New business for the week shows no improvement, and automobile requirements fall short of satisfactory volume; buying, as a whole, continues more or less hesitant.

First Quarter Prices Uncertain

Flat-rolled steel statistics for November indicate volume of sales less than that for October, the figures being 26.7 and 31.6 per cent. Production also receded from 33.1 to 26.7 per cent, and shipments dropped from 34.9 to 24.6 per cent. Unfilled orders December 1 at 147.169 tons, compared with 159.367 tons as of November 1. This backlog is the lowest in many months. Tin plate mills have been operating at about 50 per cent of capacity for the industry, though Pittsburgh plants are running practically in full accumulating mill stocks, to some extent.

Uncertainty over finished steel prices for the first quarter is passing, with current quotations carried forward on some descriptions and slight revisions applying to a few lines. Wire nails are quoted \$1.90 and \$1.95, Pittsburgh; plain wire, \$2.20, Pittsburgh; cold-finished steel bars, \$2.10, Pittsburgh; merchant bars at \$1.60, Pittsburgh, and structural shapes and plates \$1.55 and \$1.60, Pittsburgh. Semifinished steel is easier, and sheet bars are off \$1 per ton.

Pig iron movement is quiet, and new business apparently is on a competitive basis, though present values are reported to actually represent a loss against production costs. Prices have weakened, and Valley quotations are reported definitely 50c. per ton lower, with other sellers meeting conditions.

Foundries are taking but little supplies at this time, which situation also depresses fuel demands. Furnace coke is quiet, and comparatively mild weather is keeping down consumption of heating fuel. Scrap is marking time, consumers lacking interest. Heavy melting steel, however, is unchanged at \$10 to \$10.50, Pittsburgh district.

Structural Buying Gains

Steel output for the Chicago area averaged around 20 per cent at the end of the week, and was expected to go sharply lower over the holiday period, as the leading producer was scheduled to close this Thursday over the week-end. New buying was at a little better pace than in recent weeks with some of the producers, but the chief activity was in structurals.

Recent awards totalled about 2,500 tons and new inquiry about 3,350 tons, chiefly for bridges and a Western post office. A 4,000-ton bridge project went to a local company, and car repairs of a Middle Western road took around 1,000 tons of steel. A Chicago post office award of 1,200 tons of steel sheets went locally.

Prices, as a whole, were easy, with pig iron losing its differential of early last week. Ruling quotations were: Pig iron, \$16.50; rail steel bars, \$1.50 to \$1.60; soft steel bars, \$1.60 to \$1.70; and shapes and plates, \$1.60 to \$1.70.

GRAIN MARKET EASES TO SLIGHTLY LOWER CLOSE

Early Rise Followed by Dip, due to Lower Prices Abroad and to Unusually Small Reduction in Visible Supply

Grain prices fluctuated irregularly this week on the Chicago Board of Trade. The weakness in stocks, lower prices abroad, and a disappointingly small reduction in the visible supply figures turned the course of wheat lower in the late Monday trading; the close was a net loss of $\frac{1}{8}$ c. to $1\frac{1}{4}$ c. The day following, foreign news was of a bearish nature, but the market struggled higher for a fractional closing gain. The Argentine wheat yield was said to be about as large as it was last year, while cables credited Russia with being a seller of wheat, rye and barley to Germany.

Estimated Argentine Exports Unchanged

Decreasing local stocks in England and a somewhat better demand for Argentine and Canadian wheats helped to maintain the selling schedules abroad on Wednesday. The Buenos Aires wheat market was $\frac{1}{4}$ c. higher late in the day. More rains were noted in the sections of the Argentine belt and the forecast was for thundershowers, with lower temperatures for most of the Provinces.

A press dispatch from Buenos Aires stated that in the areas where frost had occurred during the growing season, the early returns show a good state of affairs. As a result, the exportable surplus was being estimated at from 125,000,000 to 150,000,000 bushels, practically the same as that of a year ago, and this in the face of the 20 per cent decrease in acreage. The Australian crop is figured at 169,600,000 bushels, with 119,000,000 bushels the exportable surplus. The carry-over is small.

Export Shipments Increase

Demand from abroad increased during the week, despite the season of the year. Sales were reported of almost 1,000,000 bushels, practically all Manitoba wheat, to the United Kingdom and to the Continent. Usually at this season foreign buying is at a minimum, as foreigners have figured out supplies to carry them over to the end of the year.

Germany was rumored to have bought from Russia almost 4,000,000 bushels of wheat, a similar quantity of rye, and 4,500,000 bushels of barley. German credits in Russia are understood to be quite large and presumably these purchases were against this. Only a short while ago it was said that Germany was negotiating with the Farm Board for further supplies, and the trade felt that if this Russian business turns out to be true there will be no need for United States wheat at this time.

Better prospects for American wheat during the coming year were predicted by James C. Stone, chairman of the Federal Farm Board in his recent report, which showed that the outlook is pretty

good for using up the United States surplus of wheat. Acreage reduction in Winter wheat in the Southwest has amounted to 18 to 22 per cent, compared with 41,009,000 planted for harvest during 1931, according to reports that have been received by the Farm Board.

Touching on the foreign wheat situation, the report shows that conditions in Canada are not good this year because there is less moisture in that country at present than for many years. The earth there is so frozen that the soil cannot store moisture. Conditions in Argentina and Australia are not so favorable as they were a year ago.

Russian exports at this time are below the figures for the same date last year, indicating that the world would not have to expect so much competition from this source as during the past year's marketing season. Increased demand for wheat from Continental Europe is indicated, as both France and Germany will have to use more wheat than they did a year ago, and more than they had expected to purchase.

Small Grains Generally Inactive

Corn broke with wheat for a loss of $\frac{1}{2}$ c. to $1\frac{1}{2}$ c. on Monday, and was dull thereafter. Mild weather has checked the tendency of farmers to ship corn, and this helps to offset the lack of buying power. Oats and rye moved within a fractional range on both Monday and Tuesday, with little in the way of news to affect either.

The United States visible supply of grains for the week, in bushels, was: Wheat, 212,374,000, off 135,000; corn, 10,881,000, up 856,000; oats, 15,604,000, off 372,000; rye, 9,508,000, off 2,000; and barley, 4,270,000, off 95,000.

Daily closing quotations of grain options in the Chicago market follow:

	Fri. Dec. 18	Sat. Dec. 19	Mon. Dec. 21	Tues. Dec. 22	Wed. Dec. 23	Thurs. Dec. 24
WHEAT:						
December	54½	54½	53½	53½	52½	....
March	56½	55½	54	54½	53½	....
May	58	56½	55½	55½	55½	....
CORN:						
December	36½	35½	35½	35½	35½	....
March	40½	39½	38½	38½	38½	....
May	41½	41½	40	40½	40	....
OATS:						
December	24½	24½	24½	24½	23½	....
May	26½	26½	25½	25½	25½	....
RYE:						
December	41½	40½	40½	40	40	....
May	46½	45½	44½	44½	44½	....

The grain movement each day is given in the following table, with the week's total, and comparative figures for last year:

	Wheat		Flour,	Corn
	Western	Atlantic	Atlantic	Western
	Receipts	Exports	Receipts	Receipts
Thursday	401,000	63,000	18,000	312,000
Friday	491,000	233,000	.....	355,000
Saturday	470,000	2,000	5,000	448,000
Monday	1,087,000	35,000	2,000	649,000
Tuesday	460,000	55,000	7,000	424,000
Total	2,919,000	388,000	32,000	2,183,000
Last year	5,112,000	1,112,000	35,000	5,380,000

COURSE OF INTERNATIONAL MONEY MARKETS

Seasonal Demand for Loans Light as Large Amounts of Liquid Funds
are Available—Interest Focused on Reparation Discussions

The New York money market remains calm and quiet, with rates moderate for all classes of accommodation. Even the year-end demands for currency promises to occasion little more than a ripple in the market, as the amount of liquid funds available is known to be unusually large. In the past week the holiday requirements were felt to a degree, but rates responded hardly at all to the needs. It is considered obvious, moreover, that a long further period of quiescent markets lies ahead, as the demands for trade and industry promise to grow at a slow pace. When the year-end bulge is over, accordingly, money dealers anticipate a speedy relaxation of conditions in all departments of the money market here.

Rediscounts Firm

The moderate stringency caused by the Christmas needs and the accumulation of funds for the heavy year-end turnover was reflected in the final hours of last week's money market by an increase in the Stock Exchange call money rate to 3 per cent from the $2\frac{1}{2}$ per cent level current for previous months. This gain was considered natural and it was foreshadowed by fairly substantial withdrawals by the banks. In the current week these withdrawals were again a feature of the market, but not on any uncomfortable scale. New York Stock Exchange call loans thus ruled at 3 per cent, and in the unofficial street market the same rate was quoted for banking-house funds. Time loans were unchanged at a range of 3 to 4 per cent for all maturities, a slightly harder tone in this department also having been reported late last week.

Rediscounts at the Federal Reserve Bank of New York remained at $3\frac{1}{2}$ per cent, which is the rate established October 16 after two advances of 1 per cent each in the preceding fortnight. Commercial paper dealings were quiet at $3\frac{3}{4}$ and 4 per cent for prime names, all maturities, while other names were 4 and $4\frac{1}{2}$ per cent.

Acceptances Steady

Prime bankers' acceptances, eligible for rediscount or for purchase by the Federal Reserve banks, were also quiet and steady. Rates on bills were $3\frac{1}{8}$ per cent bid and 3 per cent asked for thirty to ninety-day maturities, while longest maturities of five to six months ruled at $3\frac{7}{8}$ per cent bid and $3\frac{3}{4}$ per cent asked. It is not held likely that there will be any marked expansion in the volume of bills.

Debt Negotiations Dominate

In the international monetary sphere attention was divided this week between the negotiations on reparations and debts and the possibility of fur-

ther developments in regard to the gold standard. The belief in some quarters that reparations and debts will be scaled sharply downward was shattered by the action of the Congress in making specific denial of any intention to reduce inter-governmental obligations arising from the World War. This action, coupled with the earlier statement of Premier Pierre Laval of France to the effect that downward revision of German reparations could be achieved only in conformity with a downward reduction of debt payments due the United States, will restrict the freedom of action of the forthcoming debt conference which will consider the recommendations of the Bank of International Settlements advisory committee.

Senate Testimony Centers Interest

In this connection much interest was aroused by the statements made by prominent American bankers before the Senate Finance Committee, which began an investigation into foreign bond financing. Charles E. Mitchell, chairman of the National City Bank, voiced the opinion that reparations will have to be revised, owing to the opposition to the present scale of payments in the Young Plan expressed by the growing generation in Germany, which had nothing to do with the war. Otto H. Kahn, of Kuhn, Loeb & Co., expressed the view that the private obligations of Germany will be paid in the long run.

Gold Controversy Continues

The gold standard controversy was carried on owing to urgings in some American quarters that the United States abandon its anchorage to the yellow metal. Such statements are clearly uninformed and are not to be taken seriously in view of the firm opinion of the vast majority of people in this country that prosperity and trade are hardly to be promoted permanently by any expedient of this doubtful character. Contrary to the impression prevailing here and there, it is clear that suspension of gold payments by such countries as Great Britain, Japan and the Scandinavian lands is a final resource, adopted only with bitter resignation because it was found impossible to maintain the respective currencies at the parity to which the world has become accustomed. The expedient in every case implies at least a measure of repudiation of the just debts of the countries, and from this viewpoint also can hardly be considered a proposal that the United States would embrace. The attention of the entire world is now focused in vain on the United States for an discernment of an intention to shift from the gold standard.

Sterling Moves Narrowly

The foreign exchange market was steady, as a whole, this week, as contrasted to some of the wild movements current in recent weeks and months. From the viewpoint of the ordinary markets of the period preceding last Summer, the fluctuations in rates would, of course, be considered drastic. The British pound sterling, after dropping last Saturday from about \$3.45 to \$3.38, steadied at the latter level and moved in a relatively narrow arc about this figure. Slight improvement in the exchange carried the rate up to about \$3.40 again, lending color to the belief in informed Wall Street quarters that stabilization of sterling may be attempted at around \$3.50.

Daily closing quotations of foreign exchange (bankers' bills) in the New York market follow:

	Fri. Dec. 18	Sat. Dec. 19	Mon. Dec. 21	Tues. Dec. 22	Wed. Dec. 23	Thurs. Dec. 24
Sterling, checks...	3.34½	3.38½	3.38½	3.38½	3.40½	3.15½
Sterling, cables...	3.35	3.39	3.38½	3.38½	3.40½	3.42½
Paris, checks...	3.93½	3.93½	3.93½	3.93½	3.93½	3.93
Paris, cables...	3.93½	3.93½	3.93½	3.93½	3.93½	3.93½
Berlin, checks...	23.72	23.75	23.73	23.76	23.74	...
Berlin, cables...	23.74	23.77	23.75	23.78	23.79	...
Antwerp, checks...	18.89½	18.91	18.92½	18.92½	18.90	...
Antwerp, cables...	18.90	18.91½	18.95	18.93	18.95	...
Lire, check...	5.08½	5.08½	5.11½	5.10	5.08	...
Lire, cables...	5.08½	5.08½	5.11½	5.11	5.09	...
Swiss, checks...	19.51½	19.51½	19.51½	19.51½	19.51	...
Swiss, cables...	19.52	19.52	19.52	19.52	19.52	...
Guilders, checks...	40.18	40.20	40.25	40.21	40.17½	...
Guilders, cables...	40.19	40.21	40.26	40.22	40.20	...
Pesetas, checks...	8.47½	8.47	8.46	8.45½	8.46	...
Pesetas, cables...	8.48½	8.48	8.47	8.46½	8.47	...
Denmark, checks...	18.59	18.71	18.74	18.89	18.90	...
Denmark, cables...	18.60	18.72	18.75	18.90	18.95	...
Sweden, checks...	18.74	18.90	18.99	18.94	19.00	...
Sweden, cables...	18.75	18.91	19.00	18.95	19.05	...
Norway, checks...	18.39	18.64	18.74	18.71	18.77	...
Norway, cables...	18.40	18.65	18.75	18.72	18.82	...
Greece, checks...	1.28½	1.28½	1.28½	1.28½	1.28½	...
Greece, cables...	1.28½	1.28½	1.28½	1.28½	1.28½	...
Portugal, checks...	3.15	3.15	3.15	3.15	3.15	...
Portugal, cables...	3.17	3.17	3.17	3.17	3.17	...
Australia, checks...	2.68½	2.73	2.73	2.72	2.72	...
Australia, cables...	2.69½	2.74	2.74	2.73	2.73	...
Montreal, demand...	81.00	80.93	80.87	81.08	82.00	...
Argentina, demand...	25.95	25.95	25.95	25.95	25.95	...
Brazil, demand...	6.20	6.20	6.20	6.20	6.20	...
Chile, demand...	12.08	12.06	12.06	12.08	12.07	...
Uruguay, demand...	45.60	45.00	45.00	45.00	44.25	...

Yen Softer

Japanese yen were a focal point of interest, as the Tokio government announced only two weeks ago its abandonment of the gold standard. The level of exchange showed sagging tendencies this week, which were counteracted only in part by the reports that speculative holdings of dollars in Japan amount to several hundred millions. The rate dropped to about 40½c. early in the week, as against the normal quotation of 49.8c. It is believed in money circles here that additional recessions will appear in the yen.

Francs Lower

French francs were slightly weaker, while Swiss francs, belgas and lire followed a rather steady course. The Scandinavian currencies, also off the gold standard and virtually tied to sterling, held fairly steady. Dutch guilders, which dropped last week on rumors that the gold standard might be abandoned by the Netherlands, were firm this week and the rumors were completely dispelled. German marks were steady around the 23¾c. level under obvious control. Spanish pesetas tended to lose a little ground.

December 26, 1931

SURVEY OF BUILDING TRADE

continued from page 7

of 1929, showing a gain of approximately 14 per cent for the 1931 period, as against that of 1930, and a decline of approximately 41 per cent for the period of 1929.

There was a steady decline in permits during the first six months of 1931, representing a loss of about 29 per cent over those for the same period of 1930, while the period of July 1, to December 1, showed a net gain of approximately \$2,500,000, over the total for the like period of 1930.

Labor Supply Plentiful

The value of building permits issued at Syracuse during the first ten months of 1931 exceeds the amount for the same period of 1930 by approximately \$830,000. Current building operations consist almost entirely of municipal and industrial work. The supply of labor is plentiful, with the prevailing wage scale maintained at usual high levels, though indications are of a 15 to 25 per cent reduction to be effected the first of the coming year.

Rates of interest range from 5 to 6 per cent. There is a fair demand for building materials, with prices reduced generally. Real estate and building authorities are of the opinion that the government's efforts in respect to home loans will have a favorable effect upon the market.

Current Contracts Small

Permits for November approximate 50 per cent of the total for October, and only 30 per cent of the building permits issued in November, 1930. The current month is expected to show a further decrease in volume. New construction and alterations for eleven months of 1931 represent 50 per cent of the total for the same period of last year.

Several large governmental, banking and institutional construction projects, permitted for last year, either have been recently finished or are nearing completion. Current contracts of this nature are smaller and less numerous. Residential building, while materially below normal, is on a par with that of last year.

St. Paul Ahead of Last Year

Construction in St. Paul exceeded the volume of the previous year for the eleven-month period. During the current year, there were 4,326 permits, as compared with 3,842 permits last year, and valuation of permits during the current year for the eleven months' period was \$12,243,998, as compared with \$10,804,710 last year. The increase is due mainly to structures of the larger type, including buildings in or near the downtown district. There is little difficulty in obtaining loans for sound projects, but money for speculative building is scarce.

Residence Permits Doubled

Building permits in Omaha for the first eleven months of 1931 amounted to \$3,704,271, compared with a total of \$5,035,965 for the year 1930. Building construction in 1931 did not include any large projects, as there was a decrease in this type of construction, but permits for residences practically doubled, and there was a good increase in the miscellaneous class, represented by small commercial buildings and garages.

Number of Vacancies Gains

The building trade at Atlanta has shown little activity during the year just passed. No industrial developments of consequence are in progress. A United States government building to house the post-office and other Federal departments is in prospect, and certain preparations of the foundation have been made, but building is not under way, as yet. Residential construction is of minimum amount, and loan companies are conservative in financing this class of development.

A large number of building vacancies exist in both industrial and residential areas, and foreclosures in late months have been frequent. The market reports an adequate supply of materials, with collections fair, and buyers discriminating and economical. Sales for repairs continue fairly active. It is estimated that prices in general have declined from 15 to 25 per cent.

Surplus of Skilled Labor

During 1931, several large contracts, started in 1930, were completed at Dallas, without any particular new contracts for 1931. As a result, the total of building permits has been reduced. Principal construction work during the present year has been on dwelling and apartment houses, erected mainly for immediate uses. There is a surplus of both skilled and unskilled labor; and, in some instances, there has been a lowering of wage rates, and labor costs generally are cheaper than formerly.

THE STORY OF THE DRESS INDUSTRY

continued from page 5

class. In the case of a sudden style change the manufacturer of low priced dresses can sell out the goods on hand at sacrifice prices and turn to the new line with smaller loss than his competitor in the high priced group because of the forced sales of a given number of garments his loss is smaller. Low priced dresses even though outmoded may usually be sold at some price and even though this is lower than the price at which they were designed to sell it does not show the same loss that would accrue from the sale of higher priced dresses at the same or slightly higher prices.

Summary

Our study of the structure and present position of the dress industry has given us several basically significant facts. We have learned that:

1. Growth has been rapid.
2. Industry has done well in the last two years.
3. Changes are occurring continuously.
4. Medium sized concerns do most of the business.
5. Lower priced garments enjoy the most active demand.
6. There is a definite trend toward lower priced dresses.
7. Silk is the most widely used fabric.
8. Most dress manufacturing concerns are corporations.
9. Concerns less than 8 years old predominate.
10. New York is the leading dress center.
11. The fewest insolvencies are among manufacturers of lower priced goods.

Pertinent observations based on these facts are:

Dress manufacturers are influenced by style demands and by the weather. Both factors are variable in the highest degree. Much as we would like to we cannot predict the weather more than a few hours in advance. Style trends, too, are difficult to forecast and changes sometimes come with little warning.

The industry is dynamic. For the agile operator there are good profits and for all there are hazards. Physical changes are continuous and competition is intense. Growth has been well maintained and the record of the industry during the deflation period has been remarkably good.

Development of the Dress Industry

Development of the Dress Industry is a comprehensive statistical analysis of the structure of the industry. It is 30 pages in length and contains a number of charts and tables which bring out graphically the significant facts and trends which characterize dress manufacturing economics.

Copies of the booklet are available to anyone interested. Requests should be addressed to

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